

HOTEL AMÉRICAIN

Abbâs Hilmil Blvd. El Menhir, Egypt 8-6130-5 Cable: HASKELLOTELS

August 12

Dear Rose,

Here we are at the site, the same site that your father's expedition occupied almost 65 years ago, and things could hardly be any better. The weather is about average for the season - it'd be about 105° in the shade, if there were any shade - and aside from the occasional sandstorms, our camp has remained a merry one. Abdul and the boys are having a wonderful time, and we're all hitting it off just fine.

I guess it's true what they say about us all being brothers under the skin. Notwithstanding the archaeological importance of the find and the profits it may accrue, the greatest treasure I'll bring back from this journey is the wealth of understanding I've gained through our brisk cultural exchange of customs and ideas. The other night, for instance, I treated the fellows to their first omelettes, and you should have heard the exclamations with which they greeted this new culinary experience. For my part, I'm rapidly acquiring a taste for kumiss, a refreshing native beverage made from fermented

Camel's milk. At first the flavor seemed strange to my western palate, but of late I've grown exceedingly familiar with it. In fact, I'm enjoying a stoup of kumiss right now. I shall be sure to bring you a bottle or two of this zesty concoction upon my return.

Of course everything can't be perfect. We've had a slight delay while we wait for the new navigation box to arrive. (I may have forgotten to mention in my previous letter that the old box became damaged just as we were setting out.) Nevertheless, such is the spirit of camaraderie and good fellowship here in camp that the boys voluntarily continued digging on the off chance that we might locate the pyramid without the aid of scientific instrumentation. This steadfastness in the face of adversity is truly heartwarming and I've rewarded the crew by giving them today off.

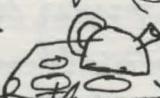
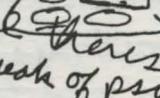
This has given me a chance to get off by myself and relax. The strain of command must be telling on me — just now, as I was sipping some kumiss, I began to feel lightheaded, and my knees buckled slightly. Or perhaps I'm just intoxicated with the awe-inspiring vastness of this solitude that surrounds me. In any case, I shall have to lay this letter aside for the time being, until this numbness leaves my hands and the landscape stops writhing around so violently... Hello & hat have been staring at the same grain of sand for last hour and have you ever heard it said

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that if you move one grain of sand you  
Change the course of history? Well here goes nothing—  
There, I done it, hope I've made the world a better  
place to live in..... My my ~~don't~~ I feel strange  
tonight I wonder what's come over me but wait!!!!  
there was something very important I meant to  
tell you about this waistland Oh yes now I remember  
Did you ever stop to think that T.S. Eliot's name  
is an anagram for "toilets"? I think I now  
understand what he was trying to tell us all,  
Rosetta —

must be the desert suns played  
mischief with my eyes for now as I gaze across  
the moonlit dunes who are in no way related  
to Lorna dune I see they've turned into crashing  
curling waves in an endless sea to shining  
see how they cast strange shadowshapes of wild  
arabian demons  who are coming for me  
with my final summons  in the kitchen with dinahs or  
possibly its the kumiss that's causing these tiny  
little spots to dance and swirl before my  
eyes like grains of sand through an hourglass  
so are the days of our life savings blown  
on a hopeless expedition that's gonna get  
you truly killed just so I can watch these  
spots as they grow and grow and get further and further 

until they're changed into gnarled blue men  
about two foot tall with evilgrins behind their  
twisting bristly green whiskers that hang all the way  
to their skinnyshin skins as the three little pigs  
used to say in Piglatin eaway eaway eaway all the  
way home home on the range   
where there's no place like home   
place like home is where the headbreak of psoriasis  
is that a shadow i see moving or cood  
it be abdul returning cood it be mack the  
knife cood it be desert sickness what cood it be  
this cotton mouthed icsweating brainfeverish  
rubberarms and legs and head for the hills  
are alive with the sound of musicians and  
sicker may be it's something i ate guess  
i should've left that last deviled ham meat all alone